



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

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News Release

FORMER OLYMPIC SPRINTER GUILTY OF IMPORTING HEROIN ***Federal Jury Finds Former Canadian Olympian Guilty of Smuggling \$600,000 Worth of Heroin***

ROUSES POINT, N.Y. – A federal jury in Albany has found Kofi Yevakpor, a well-known Canadian sprinter and former member of the Canadian Olympic Team, guilty of two counts of importing heroin into the United States following an investigation by agents of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) in Rouses Point, N.Y.

The conviction was announced today by Glenn T. Suddaby, U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of New York, and Michael J. Bridgeman, Resident Agent in Charge of ICE in Rouses Point.

The former Canadian athlete was caught in October of 2005 trying to bring six pounds of heroin into the United States at Champlain, NY, Port of Entry. Officers of Customs and Border Protection (CBP) stopped Yevakpor at the border and the case was turned over to ICE for investigation. The heroin was valued at more than \$600,000.

During the investigation, ICE agents learned from the Montreal Police Department that Yevakpor was a former customs official in Ghana before he became a Canadian citizen. At trial, Yevakpor testified that he competed for Ghana in track and field at the 1992 Summer Olympics in Barcelona, Spain.

Yevakpor also testified that he was a member of the Canadian Olympic Team in the 2000 summer games in Sydney, Australia. In June of 2001 Yevakpor was suspended following an international track event in British Columbia after he tested positive for a banned substance. He appealed the suspension but it was upheld.

At trial, Yevakpor claimed that he did not know the six pounds of heroin was hidden in his luggage. The federal jury disagreed. He was found guilty of one count of attempting to import heroin in the United States and one count of possession with intent to distribute heroin. Judge Lawrence E. Kahn presided over the trial. Yevakpor now faces a mandatory ten-year minimum at sentencing.

ICE Resident Agent-in-Charge Bridgeman said, "This case is an excellent example of close cooperating between ICE, Customs and Border Protection and the United State's Attorney's office. A significant quantity of deadly heroin never hit the streets and the man responsible now faces a significant federal prison term."

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of four integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.